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Governor signs Sen. Kuipers' bill promoting abstinence education

LANSING – Sen. Wayne Kuipers' effort to promote abstinence education was signed into law by the governor today.

Kuipers sponsored the measure that requires students be taught about the responsibility of being a parent, as well as describe adoption as a positive option for unplanned pregnancies and encourage abstinence until marriage. It also would require teaching that abstinence is the only 100-percent effective way to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

“Too often, sex-education classes have talked about how to have safe sex, instead of how to say ‘no’,” Kuipers said. “My legislation ensures young people are taught fully about abstinence.”

The legislation also will revamp health-education advisory panels formed by local school boards. At least half of the members on the panels will have to be parents of students who attend the school districts.

“Now schools have to detail their success in achieving sex-education goals,” Kuipers said.

The legislation drew strong support from the Michigan Family Forum, Citizens for Traditional Values and the Michigan Catholic Conference. After negotiations with the governor's office and the Michigan Department of Education, the administration and various educational associations supported the legislation as well.

President George W. Bush proposed more funding for abstinence programs for teenagers in his State of the Union Address earlier this year.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: A photo of the senator and the governor during the signing ceremony is available online on the Senate Majority Photowire at senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire.